



HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS NETWORK

A Community Project of Public Health - Seattle & King County

Strategic Plan 2002-2004

Mission

Health Care for the Homeless Network provides quality, comprehensive health care for people experiencing homelessness in King County, and provides leadership to help change the conditions that deprive our neighbors of home and health.

What We Value

- **ACCESS** to high quality care for people experiencing homelessness.
- **HOLISTIC** approaches to care that integrate physical and oral health, mental health, addiction services, housing, and social supports.
- **IMPROVED HEALTH STATUS** and the prevention of disease among homeless people.
- **PROVIDERS OF CARE** and support for their well being and development.
- **FLEXIBLE** service models that are tailored to the needs of homeless people, treat them with respect, and work to link them to appropriate services and housing.
- **DIVERSITY** and the effort to eliminate racial and ethnic bias in our work and in access to health care.
- **EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS** with organizations and systems with whom we collaborate.
- **A COMMUNITY-BASED GOVERNANCE** structure for HCHN that is ethical, open, and informed.
- **PROGRAM STAFF** who are committed to leadership, development, customer service, and quality assurance.
- **PUTTING OURSELVES OUT OF BUSINESS** by advocating for the social justice that will eliminate the need for our program.

Strategic Directions 2002-2004

Health Care for the Homeless Network lives creatively with the tension of preserving what we do well today and what is still needed. With limited resources, we seek to use them wisely in appropriate settings that further our mission and values.

Over the next three years, Health Care for the Homeless Network commits to provide services, education, and advocacy for and on behalf of those among us who are experiencing homelessness. We will work in close partnership with other organizations and systems to accomplish this work. Our actions will help alleviate suffering, promote health and well being, and work to change the underlying conditions that deny health and housing to so many in our community.

A. Education and Training

We will provide resources to consumers, colleagues, and the community to assist homeless people in accessing appropriate, culturally competent services. Our education and training priorities are vehicles for improving access to care, enhancing quality, and building capacity.

Priority Actions

1. Develop materials and programs to educate homeless people and service providers about available health services and how to access them.
2. Train and educate care providers about racially determined health disparities and disparities driven by other socioeconomic factors: promote cultural awareness, sensitivity, and improvements in practice.
3. Design and implement a training effort targeting the mainstream health care safety net (such as primary care clinics) on the special health

concerns of homeless people, and appropriate adaptations for reaching and serving them.

B. Services

With a sound service structure in place, HCHN will work to address some specific points of pressure and concern in our community. The six areas below are not the sole actions we will take, but we will specifically pursue opportunities to carry these out.

Priority Actions

1. Identify and implement an opportunity to expand HCHN services in South King County.
2. Design and implement a project to improve access to dental care for people experiencing homelessness.
3. Identify and implement an opportunity to expand services to chronically homeless women in Seattle.
4. Partner with Public Health clinics and community health centers to increase their capacity to provide services to homeless people.
5. Pursue HCHN participation in the federally sponsored health disparities collaborative on substance abuse.
6. Participate in efforts to improve discharge planning for homeless people leaving criminal justice settings, hospitals, and treatment programs.

In our design and delivery of services, HCHN will work to build effective linkages and partnerships with housing providers. We will also continue our efforts to integrate mental health care and substance abuse services into HCHN programs, collaborating closely with our government and community partners.

C. Advocacy

We will develop our clinical data and our experience as consumers, staff, and partners into public advocacy positions that preserve existing resources, expand care, and work toward eliminating homelessness.

Priority Actions

1. Through the HCHN Planning Council, develop an annual advocacy agenda that will focus our

work on three to five specific priorities each year. Areas of emphasis will include:

- Resources & funding
- Federal & local policies affecting access to health care
- Supportive housing development
- Prevention of homelessness

2. Support HCHN providers and consumers in developing their roles as advocates.

HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS

NETWORK is a community project housed in Public Health—Seattle & King County. We contract with partner agencies to send care providers to work with homeless people in over 60 locations countywide, including shelters, day centers, transitional housing programs, and clinics. Services offered include primary care, mental health and substance abuse services, and case management. Public Health clinics and programs also provide care for homeless people. HCHN is supported by the federal HHS Bureau of Primary Health Care, HUD, the City of Seattle, King County, and private donations.

In 2001-02, HCHN worked with its advisory Planning Council, providers, staff, and consumers to assess community conditions and determine our priorities for the years ahead. Each year, our annual workplan will specify the steps we will take that year toward implementing these priorities. For more information please contact program manager Janna Wilson at (206) 296-4655 or janna.wilson@metrokc.gov.

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